APPENDIX II

Welcome Address by Prof. Sadanand Varde, Minister for Education, Government of Maharashtra.

Dr. P. C. Chunder, Minister for Education and Social Welfare, Government of India, Shri Sadiq Ali, Governor of Maharashtra, Delegates and Friends,

On behalf of the Government of Maharashtra, the State Department of Archives and myself, I extend to you all a most cordial welcome to the 46th Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission. It has indeed been very kind of you to visit this city, distinguished for the cultural heritage of Indian history.

The history and culture of this beautiful city is not only fascinating to historians but has an appeal to the casual visitors and tourists from all over the world. We realize the difficulty and the amount of inconvenience to which you might have been put up in these days of difficult travel and our thanks are all the more due to you for making it convenient to attend this session. We are indeed happy and grateful that delegates from all parts of the country are attending this session. The Indian Historical Records Commission is meeting for the first time at Aurangabad and this is the Sixth Session, since the inception of the Commission, that is being held in Maharashtra. The previous sessions were at Bombay in 1921, at Poona in 1925 and 1938, and at Nagpur in 1928 and 1950.

The State of Maharashtra is rich in archival material. The Maharashtra Archives repositories at Bombay, Kolhapur and Pune are an important legacy of the past and a great national asset. Regional Offices at Aurangabad and Nagpur were opened in recent years. The State Archives constitute the richest legacy left by the predecessor Government of the East India Company and of the Marathas from whom the British took over. No other State in India has such an old record of the early period of an All-India nature. These Archives under the Director of Archives are the out-come of the retirement of non-current and historical records of the Government since the past three centuries embodying experiences of the people who built up history.

They are preserved for posterity because of their continual utility for the necessary government processes, for protection of public and private rights and above all for research by scholars and students.

The State of Maharashtra is rich in archival material. The ancestors of a number of old families in Maharashtra played an important role in the history of Maharashtra. Many historical families have in their possession voluminous record describing the valour of their ancestors. Family legends,

imperial and royal deeds, public and private correspondence, and state papers in possession of the decendants of men once high in authority, law suits and law decisions, account papers and manuscripts of every description in Persian and Modi scripts bring to light unknown events in the history of a country.

There has been a rapid march in historical research in this country. Interpretation of the facts of history of this land in a fairly balanced and objective manner is the need of the hour. A correct history of our society, its institutions and vicissitudes will lay a solid foundation for our future progress for it is history that provides a basis for laying down programmes for future developments. Historians have thus a sacred duty to perform. Their mission is to inspire the nation and to direct its path towards a glorious future. The task can only be effected by ransacking vigorously and utilizing the material that is at our disposal at present. Historical records are the rich treasure-house of information about our deeds and achievements in the past. Although some new material which forms a primary source of history has come to light due to the persistent efforts made by the Indian Historical Records Commission, Regional Records Survey Committees of the States and learned institutions, a vast mass of untapped material for the history of our country is still lying scattered in different places and attempts should be made to unearth it and to save it from destruction. Our State which has been an important centre of culture and learning since times immemorial can be a good field for salvaging such material.

Scientific devices of management need to be adopted so that old records are not destroyed or burnt, without evaluating their worth and only what is really necessary is preserved. This kind of approach requires not only money and training but a proper attitude to the whole question. In other words, dedication by the concerned people is of prime importance. A proposal to organise the Archives of Maharashtra on modern and scientific lines is already afoot and my Government is working on it.

On the occasion of the 46th Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission being held on behalf of the Government of Maharashtra, our State Department of Archives has undertaken and completed the programme of a few historical publications. The first to be mentioned is the publication of Hindi Sources from the Peshwa Daftar, which has been edited by Dr. Raghubir Singh, a renowned scholar and a member of the Commission. The State Archives has published a Special Number of *Maharashtra Archives Bulletin* on this occasion, in which are printed hitherto unknown and unpublished documents, available in the State Archives and articles based on such documents. The third publication is the *Handbook of Bombay Archives,* which is a long-awaited publication as the earlier Handbook, published in 1921 was out of date, because it recorded the possessions of the Bombay Archives till 1820.

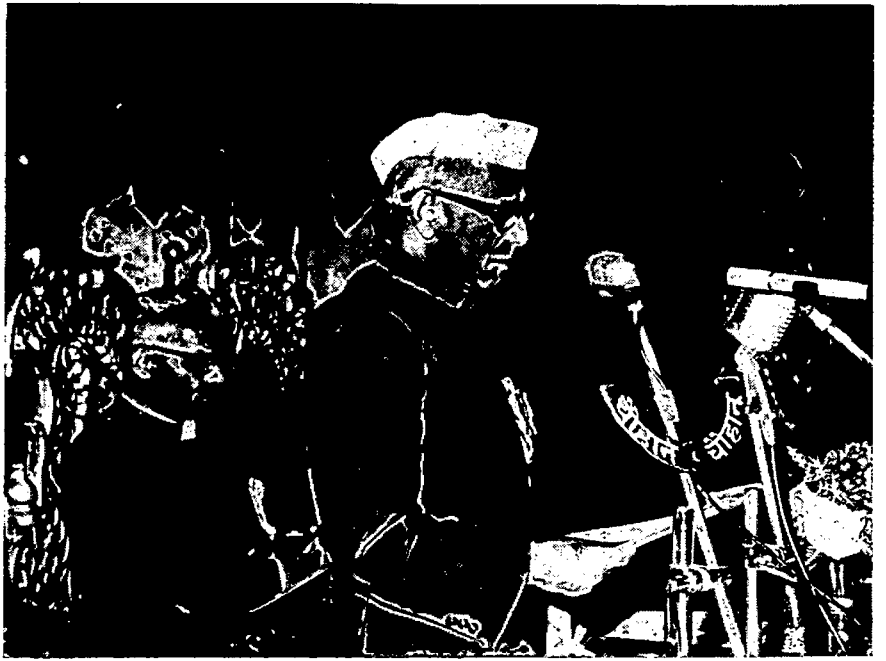
Two publications of the State Archives which are being brought out on this occasion are related to the Map Collection in Bombay Archives, the first having reproductions of some important maps and the second being the first part of the *Catalogue of Maps* in the State Archives. Another noteworthy publication of the State Archives is relating to *Emblems and*

Mottos of the former Indian States. The first Volume of *Catalogue of Papers relating to Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur* is also being published on this occasion.

The Session of Indian Historical Records Commission was proposed to be held in this city last year, but due to unavoidable circumstances, we were compelled to postpone it. However, a publication entitled, "Aurangabad: Queen of the Deccan" to suit the occasion was already prepared and published, last year. The copies of this publication are being distributed to the delegates.

Also on this occasion of the Annual Session of the Commission, an exhibition of historical records highlighting the history of Maharashtra since 1600 A.D. has been arranged. Various archival and other institutions have participated in it. These exhibits will be unique in their own way for they provide opportunities to the general public to see the various original source materials of our history.

With these few words, I accord you, once again, a very warm welcome. We are happy that you are here and it is our fervent wish that you enjoy your visit to the Session and your stay at Aurangabad. We also count upon your generosity to forgive us for any deficiency in the arrangements that have been made for you.



Shri Sadiq Ali, Governor of Maharashtra.